

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE

OF THE
Town of Oakham,

FOR THE YEAR
1867-68.

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PRINTED BY TYLER & SEAGRAVE
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REPORT OF THE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
OF OAKHAM, 1867-68.

As another school year draws to a close, we are reminded that the responsibility of presenting to you a general statement of the condition of our schools devolves upon us.

The town appropriated \$1100, for the support of schools. We also received about \$116 from the State for the benefit of schools, which gave us \$1216.

We paid our teachers in Summer \$409, in Winter \$671, making \$1080 paid teachers during the year; leaving \$136, for wood and other expenses. We do not know precisely the amount expended for wood, but think we have at least \$40 more now for schools than we had last year at the time of making our report.

\$200 were placed at the disposal of your committee to be appropriated as they thought proper which is divided as follows: East Center \$15.00; West Center 36.00; East Hill 20.00; North 46.00; West 2.00; South 31.00; Coldbrook 50.00.

There is now due the several districts,

East Center \$86.09; West Center 61.10; East Hill 45.75
North 57.30; West 55.49; Coldbrook 49.67; South 56.27;
South West 45.15.

Amount due the schools \$456.82;

Which is sufficient to provide the three months term in Summer if expended with care; and we believe it is the duty of every one hiring teachers, to be economical in the use of money as well as judicious in their selection. The town has provided all they are able; and sufficient for the required six months school, if the Prudential Committee do their part. We believe it no more than just, if any district wish for a better teacher than they can hire with the money appropriated, that they bear the extra expense themselves.

While the district system is retained we have two classes of officers, neither wholly responsible for the schools. No doubt

many of us are strongly prejudiced in favor of this method of conducting our schools, but it is being very generally abolished throughout our State. We know that almost invariably a minority elect a new committee man, and each term sees a new teacher, who commences without a knowledge of what the pupils have previously accomplished and leaves without an interest in their future.

Let this matter be fully discussed ; our great object is to secure the best schools at the least possible expense, in this matter our interests are one.

How can the greatest proficiency in our schools be secured is a question of deep interest to every friend of education.

In answer to this inquiry two general principles may be stated.

First. The removal or preventing, so far as we may, all things that hinder scholars from becoming independent thinkers.

Second. Securing the means best adapted to accomplish such an end.

Of the first we wish particularly to speak :

We regard the principle of the scholar being an independent thinker as *very important*.

Stuffing turkeys does very well ; but stuffing scholars is very poor economy ; nor does it do any better to allow the scholar an active agency in stuffing himself from the store of some other person.

This brings us to the particular thought we wish here to suggest ; that is, the habit somewhat prevalent in our schools of allowing scholars to leave their seats in order to get their lessons in company with others. In the first place it destroys order, and whatever leads to any degree of disorder is detrimental to the interests of the school.

In the second place, not one scholar in ten learns his lessons so as to understand them ; he simply *gets* them so that he may possibly recite them. This, we think is one reason why scholars sometimes fail in examination. Questions not found in the book and put in a different form from that to which they have been accustomed, frequently trouble them ; and after trying and failing they sit down with a rather discomfited look.

The principles involved they can recite very readily in the form of rules but do not know how to apply them. They had been in the habit of leaning upon some other scholars, and being deprived of this mode of doing things, they fail ; their own feelings are mortified, those of their teacher also, and their friends are disappointed. Generally, too, when scholars leave their seats professedly to study, they have four minutes for

something else to one for study. Your committee therefore protest against such indulgence in any of our schools.

Each scholar has, during the past winter, been provided with a new reader at an expense to the town of \$71. These books, at wholesale, would have cost at least \$150. Exchanging the old books for new as we did, had we no other object than to get new books, the town as a whole would not have suffered by the exchange. Towns & Holbrook's series, can now be obtained of Mr. Prouty at about ten per cent. less cost, than could Sargent's. We believe the exchange has been highly beneficial.

Our schools during the past year have not been as we could wish, but have been, in the main successful.

As we speak of each school more particularly in connection with the teachers, we have no wish to injure the reputation as a teacher of any, but only to speak as the public good demands. A teacher who has not been successful in one place may be in another, and we surely wish to help rather than hinder.

EAST HILL DISTRICT.

Summer Term. Length of school in months, 3. Whole number of scholars, 5. Average attendance, 4 2-3. Wages of teacher per month, \$16.00. This term was taught by Miss Almira Fuller. The school numbered only five scholars, these appeared well and were prompt in their recitations at the closing examination.

Winter Term. Intended length of school in mos. 3. Whole number of scholars, 10. Average attendance, 9. Wages of teacher per month, \$25.00. Was taught by Henry A. Crawford. About ten weeks after the commencement of the school he was suddenly laid aside by illness. At the time of writing this report, he is confined to a bed of sickness. The school so far as we can judge was doing well under his care and instruction.

Neither absent nor tardy—Charles F. Dean.

SOUTH DISTRICT.

Summer Term. Length of school in months, 3. Whole number of scholars, 21. Average attendance, 18. Wages of teacher per month, \$16.66 2-3. Taught by Miss Martha B. Allen. This teacher possesses both moral and mental qualifications of the highest order. The school appeared well when visited by the committee, and we consider it moderately successful.

Neither absent nor tardy—Julia Tobin, Etta L. Wells, Emma T. Adams.

Winter Term. Length of school in months, 3. Whole number of scholars, 25. Average attendance, 23. Wages of teacher per month, \$27.00. This school, one of our best, proved very fortunate in the selection of its teacher, Miss L. A. Coan, of North Truro, Mass. The school was well managed and good order maintained. Commendable progress was made in *all* branches, but particularly so in Mental Arithmetic, recitations in which we have seldom seen equalled.

Neither absent nor tardy—Lizzie S. Morgan, Julia Tobin, Mattie L. Boyd, Jessie Morgan, Lucy E. Morgan, John Tobin, Otis H. Adams, Ernest Collier, Elmer Collier, Leon P. Boyd.

SOUTH-WEST DISTRICT.

Summer Term. Length of school in months, 2 1-2. Whole number of scholars, 7. Average attendance, 6. Wages of teacher per month, \$16.00. Teacher, Miss Hattie Shedd. This school was the teacher's first experience in teaching. The number of scholars was small, and the scholars young. Evident improvement was shown on examination, and satisfaction was expressed by all concerned.

Neither absent nor tardy—Lottie M. Butler, Abbie J. Lincoln, Jennie M. Mandall, Ella J. Olmstead, Idell A. Woodis.

Winter Term. Length of school in months, 3. Whole number of scholars, 9. Average attendance, 8 1-2. Wages of teacher per month, \$20.00. Teacher, Miss Jane E. Shedd. This teacher has been in one of our schools before this, and has had some experience elsewhere. We were much pleased with the appearance of the school, both in regard to order and recitation.

We commend the interest and improvement of the smaller scholars in reading and writing. The teacher was faithful and success attended her efforts.

Neither absent nor tardy—Lottie M. Butler, Abbie J. Lincoln, Ella J. Olmstead, Charles H. Shedd, Jonas T. Shedd.

WEST CENTER DISTRICT.

Summer Term. Length of school in months, 3. Whole number of scholars, 27. Average attendance, 23. Wages of teacher per month, \$18.00. Taught by Miss Ella Spooner. This school appeared well whenever visited by the committee, and we thought this, the first effort of the teacher, successful. Neither absent nor tardy—Alice I. Maynard, O. Maria Butler, Henry N. Butler.

Winter Term. Length of school in months, 3. Whole number of scholars, 32. Average attendance, 29. Wages of teacher per month, \$30.00. Taught by Mr. Jesse Allen. Of

superior literary qualifications, pleasant and agreeable in the school room, he won the confidence and love of his scholars, and gave satisfaction to the district, still we would recommend firmer discipline and that the habit of leaving seats to speak which prevails in this school in particular, be forever abolished.

Neither absent nor tardy—Henry N. Butler, Sam'l R. Dean.

WEST DISTRICT.

Summer Term. Length of school in months, 2 1-2. Whole number of scholars, 20. Average attendance, 15. Wages of teacher per month, \$16.00.

Neither absent nor tardy—Mary E. Ripley, Susie N. Ripley.

Winter Term. Length of school in months, 3 1-2. Whole number of scholars, 22. Average attendance, 18. Wages of teacher per month, \$26.00. Miss A. M. Smith, of Barre, taught both terms. The quiet and orderly deportment of the school deserves commendation. Its appearance generally through the terms was satisfactory. The examinations were gratifying to the committee and other friends. The reading in some classes was such as to elicit remarks, specially commendatory.

Neither absent nor tardy—Charlie H. Trowbridge, Johnny C. Callahan.

NORTH DISTRICT.

Summer Term. Length of school in months, 3. Whole number of scholars, 22. Average attendance, 17 1-2. Wages of teacher per month, \$17.00. Miss Samantha Fuller, had the charge of this school. Progress was not made as we hoped for. The teacher labored hard and we do not doubt did the best she could, but the closing examination showed a manifest lack of thoroughness in the exercises of the day.

Neither absent nor tardy—Rosa J. Bullard, Flora A. Green.

Winter Term. Length of school in months, 3. Whole number of scholars, 24. Average attendance, 22. Wages of teacher per month, \$28.00. Teacher Mr. L. P. Lovell, who has had considerable experience as a teacher. We believe the school was generally satisfactory.

Neither absent nor tardy—Rosa J. Bullard, Flora A. Green, Electa L. Allen, Irver L. Winter, James H. Ware.

COLDBROOK DISTRICT.

Summer Term. Length of school in months, 2 1-2. Whole number of scholars, 24. Average attendance, 18. Wages of teacher per month, \$24.00. Abbie F. Lovell, teacher. This school promised well at the beginning of the term. The order of the school was soon, in a measure, destroyed by the unruly

disposition of some of the scholars. Many of them left the school; those who remained (11 in number) appeared as well on examination day as we could expect. At the end of ten weeks the few that remained had the privilege of attending the north district school.

It is but just to say that the teacher labored earnestly if not successfully, to make the school what it ought to be.

Winter Term. Length of school in months, 3. Whole number of scholars, 25. Average attendance, 21. Wages of teacher per month, \$46.00. Taught by J. H. Allen. We have seldom witnessed such complete order as was manifest in this school; not a scholar was seen to whisper during the closing examination. Every one knew his place and knew that he must keep it. Recitations in written arithmetic showed commendable progress. We regretted the absence of writing, for school is the only opportunity of many to learn this important branch.

EAST CENTER.

Summer Term. Length of school in months, 3. Whole number of scholars, 36. Average attendance, 32. Wages of teacher per month, \$24.00. Miss Mary Lovell, the teacher, has taught several terms in town, and we think this her most successful one. We were pleased with the promptness and definiteness of most of the scholars on examination. It showed that there had been earnest labor on the part of the teacher as well as careful study by the scholars.

Neither absent nor tardy—Alice W. Ayres, Mary E. Lincoln, Carrie M. Lincoln, Jennie E. Lincoln, Alice M. Morse, Hattie A. Morse, Mary J. Robinson, Genevieve Woodis, Frank O. Ayres, Charles D. Bullard, George H. Lincoln, Nathan R. Woodis.

Winter Term. Length of school in months, 3. Whole number of scholars, 43. Average attendance, 38. Wages of teacher per month, \$30.00. Teacher, Miss Louise P. Allen. We cannot call this a successful term of school. We were disappointed in the school, and deeply disappointed in some of the scholars. Knowing the teacher as well as we do we cannot doubt that she did for the school, what she thought her duty. We consider her failures or mistakes no excuse for the ill behavior of the scholars, which has been a disgrace to the school and the town, or for the action of some of the parents.

Neither absent nor tardy—Carrie M. Lincoln, Lizzie A. Morse, Willie L. Reed.

H. W. LINCOLN,	}	<i>School Committee.</i>
L. P. LOVELL,		
J. C. HALLIDAY.		



